

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

AID-05 OMB-01 /071 R

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ARA/PAF:RFIMBRES (SUBS)

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R 252239Z APR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 096621

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, BL

SUBJECT: PROBABLE JACK ANDERSON STORY ON BOLIVIA

1. JACK ANDERSON ASSOCIATE LES WHITTEN CALLED ARA/BC APRIL 24 AND STATED THAT HE HAD OBTAINED A DOCUMENT PURPORTING TO BE A CONFIDENTIAL BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT PLAN TO LIMIT THE POWER AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. ACCORDING TO WHITTEN, THE DOCUMENT DETAILS ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AGAINST FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC CLERGY SUSPECTED OF BEING ANTI-GOVERNMENT. CITED DOCUMENT IS ALLEGED TO STATE THAT "CIA WILL FULLY SUPPORT THE PROGRAM", CLAIMS THAT ALFREDO ARCE AND FREDDY VARGAS ARE "CIA AGENTS", AND TIES THEM TO JOHN LAMAZZA. DESK OFFICER STATED ON BACKGROUND BASIS HE HAD NEVER HEARD OF SUCH A DOCUMENT, WHICH SOUNDED LIKE A FABRICATION. HE ALSO STRESSED THAT LA MAZZA IS AN FSO, A LABOR OFFICER, AND NOT CIA EMPLOYEE. WHITTEN AGREED THAT DOCUMENT MIGHT BE FABRICATION AND SAID IT WOULD NOT BE USED WITHOUT FURTHER VERIFICATION.

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2. IN SUBSEQUENT TELECON, ALSO APRIL 24, WHITTEN TOLD
DESK OFFICER THAT THE DOCUMENT IS NOT, AS HE HAD BEEN TOLD,
A GOB DOCUMENT, BUT RATHER WAS WRITTEN BY AN INDIVIDUAL WHO
OBTAINED THE INFORMATION FROM "AN EMPLOYEE OF THE MINISTRY

OF INTERIOR WHO WISHED TO DISCHARGE HIS CONSCIENCE".
WHITTEN SAID HE IS PREPARING A STORY ON BOLIVIA "BASED ON
OTHER VERIFIED INFORMATION" AND WILL DRAW ON THE DOCUMENT
ONLY TO A VERY LIMITED EXTENT. HE DID NOT SPECIFY THE
SUBJECT OF THE ARTICLE, BUT PRESUMABLY IT WILL DEAL WITH
ALLEGED GOB REPRESSION OF THE CHURCH AND OPPOSITION GROUPS.
HE SAID THAT HE WOULD NOT USE LAMAZZA'S NAME IN THE
STORY. HE SAID HE WOULD NOT REQUEST STATE DEPARTMENT
COMMENT ON THE SUBSTANCE OF HIS ARTICLE SINCE "NO
AMERICANS ARE INVOLVED".

3. WHITTEN ALSO CALLED BOLIVIAN EMBASSY APRIL 24 AND
AGAIN APRIL 25 AND INFORMED FIRST SECRETARY FERNANDEZ AND
PRESS ATTACHE GUMUCIO THAT HE PLANS TO PUBLISH AN ARTICLE
ON CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS IN BOLIVIA WITHIN A FEW DAYS.
GUMUCIO REPLIED THAT THOSE RELATIONS ARE FRIENDLY, AND
THAT RECENT GOVERNMENT ACTION WAS TAKEN AGAINST INDIVIDU-
ALS -- WHO HAPPENED TO BE CLERGY -- BECAUSE OF THEIR
ACTIVITIES AGAINST THE STATE. EMBASSY CABLING FONMIN
SUBSTANCE OF THEIR CONTACT WITH WHITTEN.

4. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL IF AND WHEN THE ARTICLE WILL
ACTUALLY APPEAR, BUT DEPARTMENT WILL INFORM EMBASSY IN
THE EVENT. REQUEST EMBASSY COMMENT ON CURRENT STATUS
CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS IN BOLIVIA AND ON ANY RECENT EVENTS
WHICH MIGHT BE SUBJECT OF ANDERSON ARTICLE. KISSINGER

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